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On page 2 lines 13-18 the present application describes how the claimed invention resolves these problems:

"The invention comprises introducing a standardized interface between the antifriction bearing and the evaluation unit. This standardized interface makes it possible always to provide the same information at the interface, irrespective of the number of antifriction elements in the antifriction bearing."

Therefore, Rhodes does not teach, disclose, or suggest at least the above quoted elements of claim 4. Specifically, Rhodes does not teach, disclose, or suggest sensors that "comprise sensor units for determining the length change in the rolling contact for several of the antifriction elements over respective arcuate regions of the rings" and that "the sensor units each are operable to define region vectors for the length changes of the rolling contacts in their respective regions". Further, Rhodes does not disclose "an interface connected with the sensor units for receiving the region vectors from each of the sensor unit". Moreover, Rhodes does not teach, disclose, or suggest "an evaluation unit for evaluating the region vectors supplied by the interface for determining a condition of the bearing that is dependent upon the length change in the rolling contacts between the antifriction elements and the one ring".

Thus, Applicants' independent claim 4 is patentably distinct from Rhodes. Claims 5-14, depend directly or indirectly from above discussed independent claim 4 and are, therefore, patentable for the same reasons, as well as because of the combination of features in those claims with the features set forth in independent claim 4.

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Early and favorable consideration of the present application is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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